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Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands: Green is good

In her annual Christmas message, Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands drew attention to environmental issues, expressing her concern for the future of planet Earth and the unequal distribution of the planet's riches.

Queen Beatrix said "selfishness and extravagance blind people to the damage that is done to our natural surroundings and undermine community spirit... we have lost sight of the fact that the Earth's resources are finite and of behaviour that is acceptable in a civilised society."

According to the queen, people should be concerned



with more than their own comfort and welfare because "avarice distorts the aims of our economy," and she called on politicians to carefully weigh "the quality of the future when making decisions about today."

The Dutch monarch said she was encouraged by the many different programs and private initiatives calling on people to adopt environmentally-friendly ways of living, including wind and water energy and sustainable, responsible methods of production.

However, she lamented the fact that so many of these programs are overwhelmed by the need for economic growth, adding "all these hopeful moves toward change that come from so many different segments of society generate far less media attention than the drive to make and hold on to money, profits and material goods."

She called on people to work to improve the natural world and their immediate surroundings, "everywhere, people are coming up with new

ideas and ways to live in more sustainable, aware life. This is a source of hope in the future and for the future as it is young people who are behind these new ideas."

The queen quoted Mahatma Gandhi, "there is enough on the planet to satisfy everybody's needs but not everybody's desires," and added "we are beings gifted with intelligence and morals and therefore we should use these gifts to take care of the planet and work toward creating a just society."

Christmas message angers Wilders

Queen Beatrix's has angered Freedom Party PVV leader Geert Wilders - again. "Good heavens," twittered Wilders, "Is her majesty a secret member of the Green-Left party?"

It is not the first time that Wilders has lashed out at the queen's Christmas message: four years ago, he said her speech was "full of multi-culti nonsense" that directly criticised his party.

Christmas around the World



Combination photo shows, at left, athletes dressed as Santa Claus jumping in the Mediterranean sea as they took part in the Copa Nadal in the northern Spanish port of Barcelona, Spain on Sunday. The Copa Nadal (Christmas Cup) is a traditional swimming competition that takes place in Barcelona every December 25th, where participants swim 200 meters in the open sea in the port of Barcelona. Photo at right is of Waikiki Beach surfing instructor John Kepoo wearing a Santa hat as he rides the waves at sunrise on Christmas morning in Honolulu, Hawaii.

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General Air Services and Tiara Air Aruba celebrate the holidays



Director and CEO Alejandro Muyale, welcomed the employees of General Air Service and Tiara Air Aruba to the Palm Beach ballroom for the traditional yearend gala and

award party.

The Westin culinary team served a spectacular holiday buffet and Tsunami entertained filling the dance floor with elegantly dressed couples and friends.

The official part of the evening was emceed by Nelio Gomes Da Silva and General Air Service General Manager

Dimitri Pavlowitch who presented top performers with handsomely engraved plaques, gifts, pats on the back and applause.

Both Carlos Niebles and



Charlotte Heemstadt earned the Employee of the Year title for General Air Services in the Above the Wing category, the first as a Customer Service Agent, and the second as Lead Agent. Both were lauded for their excellent work ethic and skills, serving incoming and outgoing passengers at Reina Beatrix Airport with infinite patience and professionalism.

Both Oscar Carascal and Edmundo Tromp won the Employee of the Year title at Geeral Air Services in the



Below the Wing Ramp category, the first as an agent and the second as a coordinator. Both were recognized for their stellar attitude and conduct, servicing ingoing and outgoing airplanes and handling luggage at Reina Beatrix Airport, with total dedication, focus and pride.

Pictured here the Award Ceremony for General Air Services where certificates were handed to all nominees, plaques to the winners, and a special 25th anniversary certificate to Victoriano Flanegin.

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A local New Year's tradition – Oliebollen

Aruba, as a Dutch island, associates end of the year celebrations with oliebollen, described as the Dutch version of donuts, though those with some Italian background or experience may liken them to the traditional San Gennaro Festival treat of zeppole and those in our acquaintance who enjoyed that holiday dessert have been known to describe them as "Led Zepples" for the way they sit in your stomach.

Here is a tried and true oliebollen recipe:

- 1 (0.6 ounce) cake compressed fresh yeast
- 1 cup lukewarm milk
- 2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons salt
- 1 egg

- 3/4 cup dried currants
- 3/4 cup raisins
- 1 Granny Smith apple - peeled, cored and finely chopped
- 1 quart vegetable oil for deep-frying
- 1 cup confectioners' sugar for dusting

1. Break up the compressed yeast, and stir into the warm milk. Let stand for a few minutes to dissolve. Sift the flour and salt into a large bowl. Stir the yeast mixture and egg into the flour and mix into a smooth batter. Stir in the currants, raisins and apple. Cover the bowl, and leave the batter in a warm place to rise until double in size. This will take about 1 hour.

2. Heat the oil in a deep-fryer, or heavy deep pan to 375 degrees F (190 degrees C). Use 2 metal spoons to shape scoops of dough into balls, and drop them carefully into the hot oil.

3. Fry the balls until golden brown, about 8 minutes. The doughnuts should be soft and not greasy. If the oil is not hot enough, the outside will be tough and the insides greasy. Drain finished doughnuts on paper towels and dust with confectioners' sugar. Serve them piled on a dish with more confectioners' sugar dusted over them. Eat them hot if possible.

Those attempting this ritual Dutch treat can simplify the process by purchasing any of many brands of packaged mixes or simply go to Super Food Market, where they will be preparing oliebollen fresh at their outdoor stand as of today until New Year's Eve.

The mythology of this regional treat is interesting: reportedly first consumed by Germanic tribes in the Netherlands during yuletide, that period from December



26 to January 6, it was a preventative and protective measure. The Germanic goddess Perchta or Berchta or in English, Bertha, (Her name means "the bright one") was said to fly through the mid-winter sky accompanied by evil spirits trying to open the bellies of any unfortunate soul she came upon, with her sword. To appease her and the spirits, food offerings were made, among them oliebollen, which were vigorously consumed by the populace as it was believed the oil would cause her sword to slide off their bodies. Doesn't that make them even more

appealing?


Both oliebollen and zeppole consist of batter thrown in batches into hot oil and then rolled in confectioner's sugar; the former often includes raisins or apples (or both) and zeppole recipes require ricotta cheese. Worth noting: zeppole are not made with yeast, so the end product is noticeably heavier on the digestion. If you don't have to work the next day, damn the torpedoes (an unintentional reference to the weight and digestibility of either national treat) and indulge!

by Rosalie Klein

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How many parents chasing after their little ones while on vacation have had that phrase cross their minds? "Are WE having fun yet?" Watching out for the kids on vacation and keeping them entertained can make many a parent wonder if the trip was worth it, but now there is an all encompassing answer at Palm Beach Plaza Shopping Mall that will provide hours of exciting entertainment for all ages and peace of mind for anxious parents.

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complex in Palm Beach takes up the area of a full size resort and offers great activities at reasonable prices for every member of the family. Everyone will love spending time in the only Flowrider surfing environment in the Caribbean, while parents can leave their youngest at

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and providing educational fun for the little ones. There is the Baby Gym for ages 3 or 4 and Comfyland for kids up to 10, which was named "Best Playground of 2010" by the International Association of Amusement Parks and Attractions; both provide great ways for energetic young bodies to get a workout while also being guided through learning entertainment.

Continued on page 12



Share the fun on Flowrider

Post Aruba gives thanks to the community



During this time of sharing and giving, Post Aruba, using the ideas and initiatives of its employees, found a personal way to give thanks to the community.

Post Aruba's main service is domestic mail delivery. Every day when the mailmen pass through all the different streets and barrios of Aruba they get an impression of the less fortunate homes. The reality of visible poverty in certain areas has touched the heart of the Operations Department and they came up with the idea of helping some of these families during the Holidays by delivering Christmas baskets containing different essential products.

The project did not only find a willing ear among the management team of the company, but all the employees offered an economic contribution in order to make this project possible. Also donations from Romar Trading, Victoria Bottling and Tropical Bottling helped making the baskets more attractive by adding beverages.

The houses were selected by the mailmen who deliver in the respective areas by taking into consideration those

families that they could notice that are in dire need. Therefore the respective mailmen were the ones going chosen to deliver the baskets and bring some joy and hope to the families.

Post Aruba started with the idea of delivering 32 baskets as has 32 routes in Aruba, however, with the extra contribution of the employees the volunteers could complete 44 baskets so they delivered more than one basket per area.

All the baskets were delivered on December 22 and 23 so the families could enjoy the products during the Christmas weekend. This initiative will certainly become an annual tradition at Post Aruba NV.

"During the Christmas Holidays we must remember that getting together is the most important idea of this season. And this is the perfect example of what happens at Post Aruba and several other companies. We all have the satisfaction of being able to say that some other family is also enjoying the Holidays as we are enjoying ours at our own home," a spokesperson said.

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Vogue's vast archives make online leap from paper



WASHINGTON (AFP) - Bookshelves groaning under the weight of every issue of American Vogue ever published since December 17, 1892, and there have been about 2,800 of them, can now heave a sigh of relief.

Two years in the making, an online Vogue Archive is being pitched to fashion designers, photographers and stylists for whom rummaging through musty back issues for inspiration is an everyday part of the job.

"That's about 400,000 pages. It's everything," said Matt Dellinger, a writer and multimedia producer who directed the digital project for Vogue's publisher Conde Nast. "When you're looking at this, you're looking at the actual pages of the magazine ... exactly as they appeared."

At \$1,575 a year, or the price of a Dolce and Gabbana lace and satin bustier dress at Net-a-Porter, enjoying instant access to nearly 120 years of a single magazine title doesn't come cheap.

"If you live in a New York City apartment, and were thinking of getting a subscription to Vogue's newly-launched archive site, how does not paying your rent for a month sound?" quipped the Fashion Bomb Daily style blog.

But in a telephone interview from New York, Dellinger said the archive's real value lies in how every photograph, every advertisement and -- so far from October 1988 -- every garment has been assigned a "tag" or search label.

So someone looking for, say, a pleated dress by Balenciaga from an era when pleats were all the rage -- will be swept back to the September 15, 1939 issue and an otherwise hard-to-find crisp line drawing of a black number from the Spanish couturier.

Chinese activist jailed for 10 years: rights group

BEIJING (AFP) - Chinese court said Monday it had jailed veteran activist Chen Xi for 10 years for subversion, one of the longest sentences yet to be handed down in this year's crackdown on dissent.

The court in the southwestern province of Guizhou convicted Chen, who was involved in the 1989 Tiananmen democracy protest movement, after a trial lasting just a few hours, Chinese Human Rights Defenders (CHRD) said.

An official at the court confirmed Chen had been sen-

tenced to 10 years for "subversion of state power", a ruling that comes days after another Chinese dissident was jailed for nine years.

Activists believe the charge was related to essays the 57-year-old had written on advancing political reform and improving human rights in China.

Authorities launched a crackdown on criticism of the one-party government this year following anonymous Internet calls for protests in China sparked by the political upheaval in the Arab world.

Scores of activists and rights lawyers were rounded up after the emergence of the "Jasmine" campaign, which went largely unheeded, sparking US accusations of China's "serious backsliding" on human rights.

On week-end, fellow veteran democracy activist Chen Wei, who is not believed to be related to Chen Xi, was sentenced to nine years for subversion in the southwestern province of Sichuan.

UN human rights chief Navi Pillay Monday said the "ex-

tremely harsh sentencing" of Chen Wei indicates a "further tightening of the severe restrictions on the scope of freedom of expression in China".

The activist, who is a leading member of the Guizhou Human Rights Research and Discussion Association, was taken into police custody on November 29, when police ransacked his home, confiscating his computer, the rights group said.

He served three years in prison for his role in the 1989 protests.

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TUESDAY AND FRIDAY: LIVE MUSIC

British queen's husband spends third night in hospital

SANDRINGHAM (AFP) - Queen Elizabeth II's husband Prince Philip missed the royals' traditional Christmas pheasant shoot yesterday after he spent a third night in hospital following heart surgery.

Philip, 90, was rushed to hospital on Friday complaining of chest pains and required an emergency procedure to unblock a coronary artery.

The prince, known as the Duke of Edinburgh, spent a "good night" in hospital, a Buckingham Palace spokesman said yesterday.

Philip is said by aides to be eager to leave the Papworth Hospital in Cambridgeshire, eastern England, but no date for his release has been given.

He usually leads the royal family's traditional shoot at their Sandringham country es-

tate, held on December 26, or Boxing Day as it is known in Britain. The shoot was expected to have gone ahead without him.

In a statement on Sunday, the Palace said he was "in good spirits and will remain in hospital under observation for a short period."

"The Queen will continue to be briefed on his condition. We do not have details of a release date at this stage."

The prince was given a festive boost on Sunday with a Christmas Day visit from grandsons Prince William and Harry and four other of his eight grandchildren.

The queen herself visited her husband of 64 years at the hospital on Sunday after the royal family's Christmas church service.

Gunman in Texas rampage dressed as Santa

GRAPEVINE (AFP) --A man dressed as Santa Claus stormed into a Texas apartment, opened fire and killed six family members who had just opened their Christmas presents before killing himself, police said yesterday.

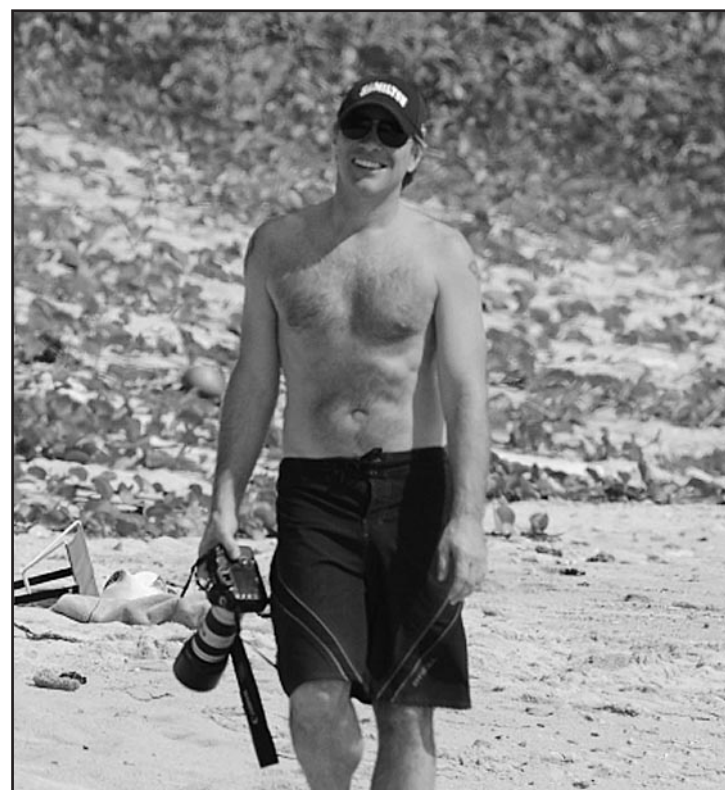
"It was a traditional Christmas gathering, with a Christmas tree, and they had just completed opening their gifts, it appears, when the incident took place," Grapevine police spokesman Sergeant Robert Eberling told AFP.

Police rushed to the apartment around midday Sunday after receiving a 911 call with no one on the line.

He said two handguns were found near the bodies and all seven people -- aged 15 to 58 -- were believed to have died from gunshot wounds. They were all found in a living room area of the two-story apartment. There were no survivors.

Police were waiting for autopsy results before releasing the names of the victims.

Bon Jovi Dead? Nah, he's living it up Caribbean Style!



Bon Jovi dead? No way! The rumor that won't die may still plague the rock sensation but he doesn't seem at all bothered as he was spotted on holiday in St. Barts. The legendary rock singer took a role reversal as he played photographer for a day on the beautiful Caribbean island. With his shirt off (swoon!) and his hair hiding under a baseball cap, Bon Jovi looked like rock royalty and totally at ease.

13 found slain in truck in northeast Mexico

NUEVO LAREDO (AFP) - Troops made a grisly Christmas discovery in northeastern Mexico when they found 13 bodies in a truck, seen as the latest explosion of violence in the battle between warring drug cartels.

Soldiers found two messages at the scene in Tamaulipas state "alluding to the rivalry between criminal

groups" in the northeast, the Department of Justice said in a statement overnight into Monday.

Investigators say the murders are linked to Friday's discovery of 10 bodies in the town of Tampico Alto, in neighboring Veracruz state, and attacks by gunmen last week on three buses that left 16 people dead.

Strike paralyses London underground train system

LONDON (AFP) - London's underground train service was virtually halted by a strike over pay yesterday, disrupting the start of the post-Christmas sales and sporting fixtures.

Most lines were shut or operating a vastly reduced service, but shoppers used cars, buses and taxis to reach retail outlets, registering "record-breaking" levels of trade, according to sales figures.

Members of the London

Underground train drivers' union ASLEF voted overwhelmingly to hold a 24-hour strike on December 26, a public holiday in Britain known as Boxing Day, and on three more dates in the coming weeks.

Drivers are angry that their employer is refusing to give them extra pay and a day off for working on Boxing Day. The operator has described their demands as "outrageous".

In anticipation of the strike,

Premier League football club Arsenal postponed their Boxing Day fixture with Wolves by 24 hours, but Chelsea's match with London rivals Fulham went ahead on yesterday.

The drivers' union plans three more 24-hour strikes on January 16, February 3 and February 13 over the pay issue.

ASLEF said it balloted 2,200 drivers on the Underground network, known as the Tube, and they returned a 92.3 percent vote in favour of action.

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Fresh flood warning for the Philippine disaster zone

MANILA (AFP) - The Philippines yesterday warned flood survivors in the south of the country to brace for fresh floods, just days after tropical storm Washi whipped the region leaving more than 2,000 dead or missing.

The government warned a weather disturbance that could develop into a tropical storm had dumped heavier than normal rainfall over the southern island of Mindanao.

"People living near the mountain slopes and in the low-lying areas of these river systems... are advised to take precautionary measures," the National Disaster Risk Reduction and Management Council said in a late-night bulletin.

"Emphasis should be on proactive actions -- evacuation rather than rescue. Let's untiringly aim for zero casualties."

The council said the state weather service expected 206 millimetres of rainfall to fall over eastern Mindanao in the nine hours to 5:00 pm yesterday, with more expected after



AFP photo shows a boy wiping rain water from his eyes near a destroyed bridge at Kapay river, one of the three rivers that overflowed during typhoon Washi, in a remote area in Iligan City, southern Philippines.

that.

Floods unleashed by Washi obliterated entire communities on Mindanao on December 17, many of them shanty towns built on sandbars which were swept out to sea as their poor migrant inhabitants slept.

For several hours straight, Typhoon Washi poured rain on the Philippines. Rivers swelled

up and water rushed over the banks pulling thick mud from mountains regions into the towns.

More than 60,000 people lost their homes, 1,236 people were killed and 1,000 others are reportedly missing, mainly in the Mindanao ports of Cagayan de Oro and Iligan, according to the council.

Balkan states bust drug trafficking ring, arrest 33

PODGORICA (AFP) - Police in Montenegro, Bosnia and Albania said yesterday they had arrested 33 people in a joint crackdown on an international ring of drug traffickers.

In Montenegro 16 people were arrested as part of a joint action with Bosnian and Al-

banian police codenamed "Trio", a statement said.

In neighbouring Bosnia, 13 people were captured during searches aimed at "arresting members of a group of criminals involved in drug trafficking," local police said in a statement.

Another four were arrested

in the northern Albanian town of Shkodra, near the border with Montenegro, police in Tirana said in a statement.

During the search in the northern Albanian region, the police said it had seized around 12 kilograms (26 pounds) of marijuana and some automatic weapons.

The regional operation that has been under way for six months and also involves police of Croatia, Serbia and Albania, led to the arrest of a total of some 60 suspects.

In Monday's raid in the northwest Montenegrin town of Niksic, police seized 17 kilos of marijuana, bringing the total confiscated in the overall operation to 367 kilos.

Fear grips Nigeria after Christmas attacks kill 40

MADALLA (AFP) - Fear gripped Nigeria yesterday after a wave of Christmas bombings blamed on Islamists killed at least 40, including worshippers who were left begging for mercy as they exited a church.

Hundreds of residents sought to flee the violence-torn city of Damaturu yesterday fearing further attacks and clashes between Islamists and police, while some 30 Christian shops were burnt in the nearby city of Potiskum late Sunday.

At the damaged Saint Theresa Catholic Church in Madalla near the capital Abuja where the bloodiest attack took place, a special mass was held in memory of the 35 victims there despite splattered blood still visible on the outside.

"I have never cried before," Father Isaac Achi told the audience of several hundred which included bishops and priests from the region as well as the Vatican's representative

to Nigeria.

"Yesterday I cried. This morning I cried. But with all of you around today, I will not cry again. Seeing you coming to say this mass, I'm telling you, I will not cry again."

The blast struck as the service was ending and worshippers were filing out.

Some of the wounded, including one man with a horrific stomach wound, ran toward a priest for final blessings. Some were burnt in their cars.

Nigeria has seen scores of attacks claimed by Islamist group Boko Haram, but some analysts said the bombings marked a dangerous escalation in a country divided between a mainly Muslim north and predominantly Christian south.

The government in Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation and its largest oil producer, blamed Islamist sect Boko Haram for three attacks on Sunday.



PYONGYANG: This handout picture, taken by North Korea's official Korean Central News Agency yesterday, shows Ri Hui-Ho (3R), widow of former South Korean President Kim Dae-Jung and her delegation members offer their condolences to late North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il at the Kumsusan Memorial Palace, where the body of late North Korean leader Kim Jong-Il lies in state, in Pyongyang. The heads of two South Korean delegations met North Korea's new leader Kim Jong-Un during a visit to Pyongyang to pay respects to his late father Kim Jong-Il, Seoul's Unification Ministry said. (AFP PHOTO)

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Health & Living

PIP implants have been sold to Dutch firm under new name

AMSTERDAM- The potentially sub-standard breast implants made by a French protheses maker now under investigation were sold to about 1,000 Dutch women under a second name, broadening the scope of the scandal that could

already affect some 300,000 women worldwide.

They were sold in the Netherlands rebranded as "M-implants".

The rebranding of PIP implants potentially expands the scope of the health controversy in which PIP — once the third-largest maker of breast implants in the world — stands accused of using industrial-grade instead of medical-grade silicone in some of its protheses, which were sold from Europe to Latin America.

Health authorities have cited no evidence of increased cancer risk due to the PIP implants, but have said they have higher rates of rupture that could cause inflammation and irritation.

Women across the globe have PIP's implants, with the majority of them living in South America and Europe. France's health ministry says that women with PIP implants don't have any higher risk of being diagnosed with cancer than women that have implants from other companies.

Meanwhile a page of the Interpol's website features French Jean-Claude Mas (72), founder of the French Poly Implant Prothese (PIP) company, who is listed as being sought in Costa Rica for offences concerning "life and health."

Toxin found in Chinese milk

SHANGHAI (AFP) - China has discovered excessive levels of a cancer-causing toxin in milk produced by one of the nation's leading dairy companies, the firm said, in the latest in a series of food safety alarms.

The government's quality watchdog found high levels of an aflatoxin, which is caused by mould, in milk produced by the Mengniu Dairy Group, the company said in a statement issued Sunday.

Mengniu said the milk, produced at one of its plants in the southwestern province of Sichuan, was tested before being sold so the contaminated milk never reached the market.

China is trying to crack down on product safety violations to reassure citizens and restore faith in the government after a series of high-profile scandals.

Milk was at the centre of China's biggest food safety scandal in 2008 when the industrial chemical melamine was found to have been illegally added to dairy products to give the appearance of higher protein content.

At least six babies died and another 300,000 became ill after drinking milk tainted with melamine.

Product safety problems have been found in goods ranging from pharmaceuticals to cooking oil. In September, the government arrested 32 people over the sale of cooking oil made from leftovers taken from gutters.

Aflatoxins can be found in milk after cows consume feed contaminated by mould and can increase the risk of cancer, including liver cancer, according to the World Health Organisation.

Mengniu said the products had been destroyed, and apologised to consumers.

The General Administration of Quality Supervision, Inspection and Quarantine made the latest discovery in nationwide testing of 200 dairy products made by 128 companies, the agency said separately.

DESDE 5 DI SEPTEMBER 2011

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Huisartsenpost	527 4580
Clinica di dialisis	527 4370
Departamento di revalidacion	527 4600
Departamento di oncologia	527 4350
Departamento di radiologia	527 4505
Poli interne geneeskunde	527 4300
Poli kinderartsen	527 4420
Wondenpoli	527 4200
Poli urologia	527 4210
Poli psikiatria	527 4640
Poli cirugia	527 4225
Poli longarts	527 4310
Hunta di directiva	527 4010
Departamento di facturacion y cobranza	527 4075
Funcionario di keho	527 4444



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US Internet users not as scam-savvy as they think

(AFP) - US Internet users are continuing to fall for online scams, especially if the promised prize is a chance at a hip new gadget such as a tablet computer, according to a new study.

More than half of those surveyed in a Ponemon study backed by Internet security firm PC Tools indicated they would reveal mobile phone numbers, email addresses or other information when told they might get something for nothing.

Cyber crooks have long exploited human nature with scams relying on "social engineering" to get people to reveal secrets such as passwords or unwittingly install computer viruses.

Manipulations can range from telling people they will be entered in prize drawings after filling out detailed surveys or getting them to open booby-trapped files said to contain sexy or pornographic imagery.

Scenarios people fell for included offers of supposed free anti-virus computer software and get-rich-quick opportunities, according to Ponemon.

People were particularly susceptible when ploys were baited with promises of chances to win tech prizes such as mobile phone ringtones or tablet computers.

Tablet computers made particularly strong lures in all three countries, according to surveys.

Sci-Tech

Wild Christmas weather hits Australia

SYDNEY - (AFP) Wild weather battered Australia Sunday, with a tropical cyclone closing in on the north as tornadoes and thunderstorms brought hail in the south and huge swells forced the closure of popular beaches.

Tropical Cyclone Grant intensified to a category two storm off the Tiwi Islands north of Darwin, packing destructive winds of 130 kilometres (80 miles) and forcing Christmas revellers into lockdown.

The weather bureau said Grant was "slowly intensifying" and advised residents in the cyclone's path to take shelter, with gales and heavy weather closing in as the storm inched toward the mainland.

It came as ex-tropical cyclone Fina whipped up huge four-metre (13 foot) waves on the popular northeast coast, creating dangerous surf conditions which forced tourist beaches to close.

Planes were diverted and delayed at Melbourne after thunderstorms, hail and a tornado swept through the southern city, Australia's second-biggest, smashing skylights and car windscreens.

The windstorm swept



Wild surf breaks on the cliffs of Bronte Beach as storms lash the coast of Sydney in July 2011.

through at Keilor Downs, northwest of the city, according to the State Emergency Service (SES).

"There was a tornado reported at Fiskville and we know it touched down at Keilor Downs because we had some SES volunteers there and they had to run for shelter," said SES spokesman Lachlan Quick.

Conditions were fine in Sydney, recently hit by unseasonably cool and wet weather, with thousands of tourists flocking to the city's iconic beaches to catch a rare sunburst for the Christmas holiday.

day.

Roger Butler, a lifeguard at renowned Bondi Beach, estimated between 8,000-10,000 people had hit the famous sands to celebrate the holiday.

"Generally it's a pretty relaxed family atmosphere on Christmas day," Butler told AFP.

Cyclone Grant is expected to dissipate over the islands off northern Australia as it skirts across land before regaining strength over the warm waters of the Van Diemen Gulf and crossing back onto the coast beginning of the week.

Northern Australia was savaged by a top-level cyclone earlier this year which flattened key agricultural areas, almost immediately after record flooding devastated the region, swamping coal mines and destroying homes.

There is a strong chance that much of Australia's east will have heavy rainfall over the next few months because of a La Nina weather pattern in the Pacific Ocean, according to the weather bureau.

La Nina is characterised by unusually cool ocean temperatures in the eastern equatorial Pacific and has been associated with strong rainfall in Asia and Australia.

Was that Santa up there? No, Soyuz rocket debris

BRUSSELS (AFP) - A ball of light streaking across the night sky in northern Europe on Saturday at a time when many imagined that Father Christmas was doing his rounds was nothing more than

Soyuz rocket debris, Belgian experts say.

"The ball observed ... above Belgium, The Netherlands, France and Germany was the return of the last stage of the Soyuz rocket launcher,"

Belgium's Royal Observatory said Sunday.

Videos nearly 30 seconds long were posted on the Internet showing the ball of light trailing a long tail, seen at dusk Saturday in southern

Belgium, northern France and many parts of Germany.

Astronomers concerned with unidentified flying objects at a centre in Mannheim, southwestern Germany, were swamped with telephone calls, and they initially thought it was a meteorite.

The Belgian observatory solved the mystery on Sunday when it linked the sighting to the crash of a Russian satellite on Friday.



Early Bird Special \$24.95
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Entree:
* Soup of the day- or Home salad - or Caesar Salad

Main Dish
Home made stew chicken (jerk chicken)
or
Arawak steak
(Tenderloin steak with caramelized onions)
or
Fish Fillet (Grouper) creamy garlic or Criollo sauce.

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COMICS

PICKLES



MOMMA



CALVIN and HOBBS



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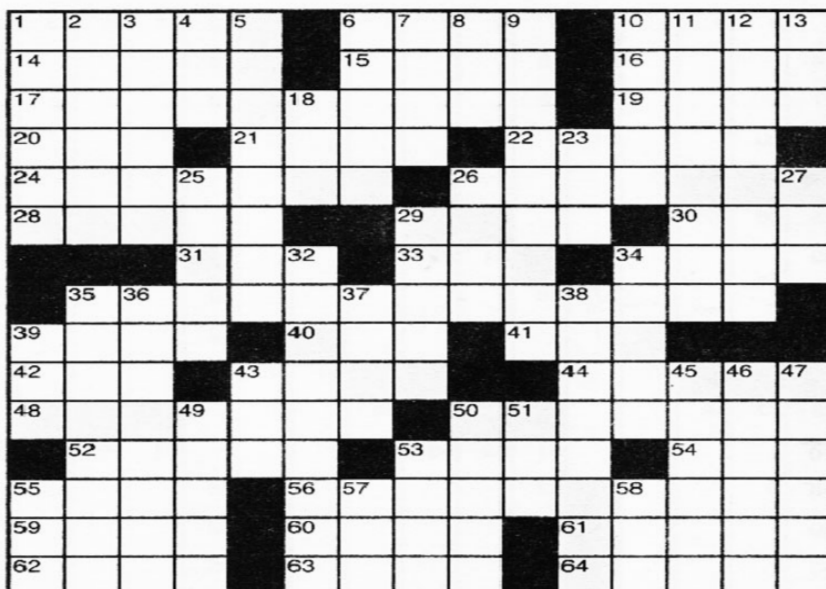
CLOSING TIME

ACROSS

1. Plant pest
6. "X-Files" subjects, often
10. Hamlet's lament over Yorick
14. Cartoonist George
15. Narrow aperture
16. Ration
17. Monopolize at a cocktail party
19. David Bowie's model wife
20. Inner: prefix
21. Chirp
22. Encourage negatively
24. Royal baton
26. Flexibility
28. Mission founder Junipero
29. Thai money
30. Cry of discovery
31. Bullfinch: var.
33. Small French landmass
34. Ancient Dead Sea kingdom
35. Fire-truck fixtures
39. Big 10, e.g.: abbr.
40. Beluga's best part
41. Burrow
42. Fermented drink
43. Shipping weights
44. Marsh plant
48. Cause of troubled waters
50. "Fear of Flying" heroine
52. Basso Cesare
53. Urban atmosphere

DOWN

54. Karin of "You Only Live Twice"
55. English gun
56. Showy annual flower
59. Chinese menu listing
60. The Michelin Man's middle
61. Le prof's charge
62. Actor-rapper of "New Jack City"
63. Sloop feature
64. Comforter down
1. Mother Superior
2. Jump on
3. More torrid
4. Gomez's furry cousin
5. Chitchat at the water cooler
6. Chair-man?
7. Turkey, Broadway-style
8. Engine need
9. Trout type
10. Female friend: Sp.
11. Summer drink
12. Moored off shore
13. Inouye's title: abbr.
18. Originally named
23. "Shoo!" cowboy-style
25. Evidence
26. Glut
27. Thanksgiving tuber
29. Remains
32. Spoof experts
34. Trimmed
35. Word for some alternative medicine
36. Type of swimsuit
37. Second to —
38. Contradict
39. Lift cage
43. Foul —
45. Sidestepped
46. Disney's "The Emperor's New —"
47. One who brings home the bacon
49. Dogma
50. Urge forward
51. Pregrown grass
53. Goa garb
55. Hindustani title
57. Actress Long of "Boyz n the Hood"
58. Will Smith portrayal



BOTICA

DRUG STORES OPEN AFTER HOURS

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Fri.-Sun. 9 p.m.-2 a.m.

CAS MARIE
Alzheimer's Day
Care Center
Tel: 5696910

Important
Telephone
Numbers

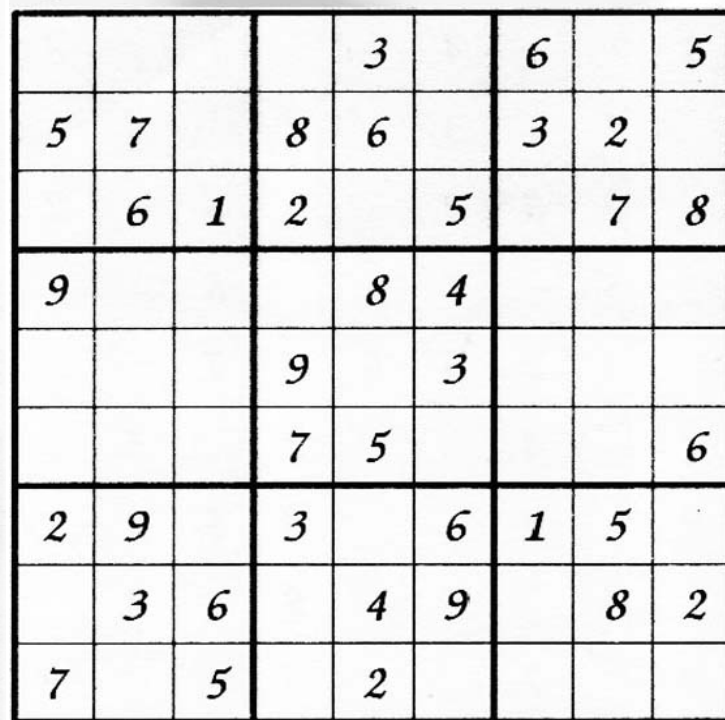
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Horacio Oduber Hospital
Tel. 5274000

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POLICE HDQS
Telephone 100

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Sudoku



SOLUTION

5	9	6	8	7	1	5	4	2
2	8	4	6	3	9	1	7	5
4	5	1	9	2	8	6	3	7
9	6	8	7	5	4	1	2	3
1	7	5	2	8	9	3	6	4
8	2	3	6	7	1	9	5	8
6	7	1	9	8	4	2	3	5
3	1	9	4	2	6	7	8	5

Complete the grid so that every row and every column contains the numbers 1 through 9. A number is Never repeated in a row or column. In addition every rectangle must contain the numbers 1 through 9

Finance

Spain economy shrinks, outlook bleak, says Economy Minister

MADRID (AFP) - Spain's economy will shrink in the last quarter and faces a bleak outlook for the coming months, its new economy minister warned Monday, heightening fears of a fresh recession.

Luis de Guindos dampened already gloomy expectations for the economy as the new conservative government got to work on its program of tough spending cuts.

"This quarter the Spanish economy will surely see a downturn and we will return to negative growth," he told reporters.

"Make no mistake, the next two months are not going to be easy, neither from a growth nor a jobs point of view," he said at a ceremony for his top ministry staff taking office.

The fourth-quarter outlook "is logically going to determine the economic profile we will enter in the coming year, which is going to be a relatively slowed-down profile."

Media quoted him later telling reporters that gross domestic product would contract by 0.2 to 0.3 percent in the current quarter. Spain's official growth figure for the third quarter was zero.

Media seized on De Guindos' words Monday as a sign that Spain will tip back into recession in the coming months. Both leading dailies El Pais and El Mundo interpreted his words as signalling a recession at the start of 2012.

Various economists have forecast negative growth in the current quarter and the first three months of 2012. A recession is commonly defined as two quarters of contraction in a row.

Analyst Daniel Pingarron of investment IG Markets said many European countries are "approaching negative GDP growth in this fourth quarter and the first quarter of next year, to improve slightly in the second half."

"All the forecasts point to this as the most likely scenario" for Spain, he told AFP after De Guindos' remarks.

Spain only emerged at the start of 2010 from an 18-month recession, triggered by the global financial crisis and a property bubble collapse, which destroyed millions of jobs and left banks with mountains of bad loans.

The collapse forced a major restructuring of the financial sector and tough spending cuts which the new government has vowed to deepen in order to create jobs and reassure the financial markets that lend to Spain.

The new right-leaning government of Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy following November elections has set a tight timetable for reforms to fix the slumping economy and reduce the public deficit. Its top priority is to cut its unemployment rate, which is the highest in the industrial world at 21.5 percent.

Cuba to expand small business reform

HAVANA (AFP) - Communist-ruled Cuba will expand its small business reforms in 2012 to allow people in a growing number of industries to operate as independent entrepreneurs, state media reported yesterday.

Havana opened the door to private business nearly two years ago, beginning with hairdressers and expanding to tailors, watchmakers, cooks, plumbers and other independent professionals.

Despite excessive bureaucracy and a difficult transition for many on the island,

the program was seen as a success. President Raul Castro expanded it in October 2010 and currently some 357,000 Cubans earn their living in the private sector.

Beginning January 1, the program will be broadened again to allow people currently working in carpentry, upholstery, metallurgy, photography, jewelry, shoe repair and electronics under state enterprises to go private.

"Gradually through the year, salaried employees of provincial state businesses in fields of personal, technical

and home services will be integrated into the leased property system for independent workers," it was reported.

The Communist Party's paper said the measure will apply in six of Cuba's 15 provinces, including Havana, and "will be covering the rest of the country in a progressive manner."

It did not specify the number of workers involved in this new stage.

Brazilian economy overtakes Britain

LONDON (AFP) - Brazil has overtaken Britain as the world's sixth largest economy, a London-based research group said yesterday.

In its latest World Economic League Table, the Centre for Economics and Business Research (CEBR) said Asian countries were moving up while European countries were slipping down.

CEBR chief executive Douglas McWilliams told BBC radio that Brazil's advance was part of a wider trend.

"I think it's part of the big economic change, where not only are we seeing a shift from the west to the east, but we're also seeing that countries that produce vital commodities -- food and energy and things like that -- are doing very well



Lunch Buffet

Saturday - Sunday

12:00 - 3 p.m.

Dinner

Monday - Sunday

6:00 - 11:00 p.m.

Palm Beach Center - Palm Beach Aruba - Tel: 5860944

Saudi posts \$81.6 bn budget surplus as revenues double

RIYADH (AFP) - OPEC kingpin Saudi Arabia on Monday posted a budget surplus of 306 billion riyals (81.6 billion) for 2011, as revenues turned out to be double the forecast, the finance ministry said.

The world's largest crude oil exporter had expected a deficit of 40 billion riyals (\$10.7 billion), or 7.4 percent, with planned expenditure of 580 billion riyals (\$154.7 billion).

Revenues surged to 1.110 trillion riyals (\$296 billion), the finance ministry said in a statement, compared to a forecast of 540 billion riyals.

Expenditure hit 804 billion riyals (\$214.4 billion).

The figure of 224 billion riyals (\$59.7 billion) quoted by the television was actually the excess of real spending over budgeted spending.

Saudi Arabia traditionally uses a conservative price for

oil of around \$60 per barrel in its budget forecast.

The kingdom pumped crude over its quota this year to cover for a shortage resulting from the conflict in Libya.

Saudi oil minister Ali al-Naimi said earlier this month that Riyadh's current output level was 10.047 million barrels per day, significantly higher than its quota of 8.05 million bpd.

Last year, Saudi Arabia posted a 17 percent budget surplus, or 108.5 billion riyals (\$28.9 billion), despite soaring spending thanks to high crude prices.

For 2012, the kingdom expects a small surplus of 12 billion riyals (\$3.2 billion), with revenues expected to hit 702 billion riyals (\$187.2 billion), while expenditure would surge to 690 billion riyals (\$184 billion).

It said 168 billion riyals (\$44.8 billion) would be spent on education, 87 billion riyals (\$23.2 billion) on health, 29 billion riyals (\$7.73 billion) on municipal services, 35 billion riyals on roads and communication and 58 billion riyals (\$15.47 billion) on water, industry and agriculture.

Finance Minister Ibrahim al-Assaf said GDP was expected to grow by 6.8 percent this year.



LONDON -- AFP photo shows shoppers queuing outside Selfridges department store during the early hours of Boxing Day in central London, yesterday, in search of a bargain on the first day of the post Christmas Sales. London Underground drivers yesterday walked out in a row over pay, threatening disruption for shoppers at the start of the post-Christmas sales and football fans hoping to catch a festive fixture.

YESTERDAY'S Crossword Answer

WEPT	PILE	TEASE
ACLU	EVEL	ANSON
THUG	PINE	DRANG
TOGO	PEACE	PIPE
	FRED	ROC
ANSWER	WARLOCKS	
LOCAL	CHLOE	ANA
PURR	CHILL	PSAT
ESE	SHINY	PEEVE
NEWPEACE	SPADES	
	EXO	MISC
WARISHELL	ETAL	
MONDE	ERLE	NILE
BONUS	LIEN	IRAN
ASSET	PSST	KENO

Divi Village is proud to show off its new lobby



Divi Village opened the new lobby without much fanfare, but with great pride. The spacious new facility was also designed to serve guests checking into the Divi Links Residences and the Dutch Village. With tall ceilings, large fans, natural wood beams, rough-cut stone walls, and open windows and doors, the lobby allows the tropical exterior to become an integral part of the structure. While the center stage is occupied by a user-friendly front desk, the right wing is dedicated to timeshare sales and the left wing to a sunken lobby bar with comfortable seating and an upstairs round lounge hanging just below the tree tops, overlooking the sunsets on the beach and the 9th hole lagoon.

General Manager Gerrit Griffith who recently won the Shoco, Lifetime Achievement Award for excellence in tourism was on hand to welcome guests at check in and the local taxi drivers, visiting the new lobby for the first time.

Also opening later in January, the Alhambra Mall, a lovely cluster of more than a dozen dining and shopping outlets including a food court featuring Subway, Dunkin' Donuts and Little Caesars Pizza with air-conditioned indoor or tropical outdoor seating, a mini market, The Lazy Lizard gift store, Fusion, a stylish Jazz & Cigar Wine Lounge, and Ginger, Divi's own famed Asian-Fusion restaurant, serving eclectic, exotic dishes in a chic and contemporary setting. The mall is open from the early afternoon to late in the evening.



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	WEDNESDAY ALL YOU CAN EAT BBQ RIBS <small>Ribs including Cole slaw and French fries.</small> \$19⁹⁵
	THURSDAY ITALIAN NIGHT Free Caesar Salad <small>* Per dish per person</small>
	FRIDAY FAREWELL KARAOKE PARTY <small>From 6pm till 9pm</small> TAPAS MENU HAPPY HOUR 2X1 <small>AND A LOT OF FUN!</small>
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	DAILY HAPPY HOURS <small>Noon: 12:00 - 1:00 PM Afternoon: 4:00 - 6:00 PM Night: 9:00 - 10:00 PM</small>

Located at Caribbean Palm Village Resort | Tel: 596 6740 | Daily Breakfast-Lunch-Dinner | Snack Menu Available

Are we having fun yet?

Continued from page 4



Another section of the third floor of the shopping center run by Fun City has baby rides, video games and air hockey scaled to pint-sized players and a rock climbing wall and other fun for teenagers.

For a fee of \$20 per hour, parents can rest assured their youngsters are well cared for and having a great time in a secure, controlled environment. Parents and children are photographed at check in, and children are not released to anyone but their parents. Both receive ID tags with bar codes which must match up when coming to retrieve your children and adults also are provided a beeper so they may be summoned at anytime, if necessary. Couples are then free to relax and enjoy Palm Beach's many grown-up attractions, such as shopping and fine dining, with peace of mind.

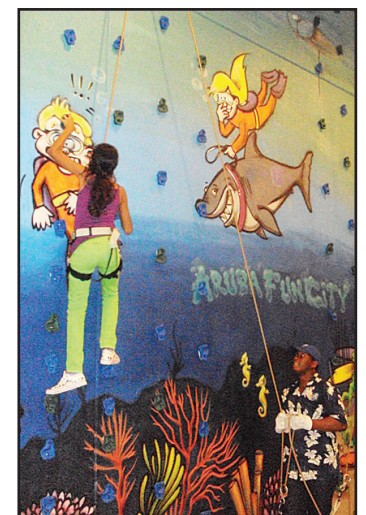
Fun City provides two great environments for the family to share some quality time, Laser Tag and Desperado, a "5-Di-

mensional" interactive entertainment experience that will delight the young and the young at heart; an absolute bargain at only \$5 for either adventure. If you want to organize a unique and thrilling birthday party, the complex

offers terrific packages that will make it an event to remember at a reasonable price.

All the family will find Flowrider and Fun City adding an exciting new aspect to their Aruba vacation and now you have an answer when you teenagers ask "Are we having fun yet?"

by Rosalie Klein



Bon Dia and Welcome to Aruba!



Whether you're a first time visitor to the island, or you vacation with us every year we invite you to enjoy one of the most memorable vacation destinations of your life. We know, we're Divi Resorts and Aruba has been our home for over 40 years.

Divi Resorts has 5 resorts in Aruba, in addition to The Links at Divi Aruba golf course, and the Alhambra Casino. For years we've offered high quality all inclusive and timeshare vacations; and over 40,000 members actively participate in the Divi Vacation Ownership Program.

Many of our guests have found that one vacation to Aruba per year is simply not enough! Our solution: The Residences at Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort.

The Residences are luxury full ownership condominiums nestled within the lush greens of The Links at Divi Aruba golf course.

Make Aruba your second home! Condominiums from the \$300s.

You can now purchase your own condominium and still enjoy the resort amenities of the Divi collection.

For more information about The Residences, visit our sales office located in the golf clubhouse at the Divi Village Golf & Beach Resort.

For questions or to schedule your appointment to view a condominium, contact sales director John Kelly at (297) 583-9971 or email: sales@diviarubaresidences.com

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Adorable and affordable; 5 Burgers Aruba offers an island twist to the great American Burger

Expatriates residing on Aruba, Aaron and Rosie Walisever are living their dream: a home on paradise while welcoming all and sundry to their proud undertaking, 5 Burgers Aruba. Some may be quite well acquainted with a nationally known U.S. franchise bearing the name "5", and patrons can expect the same great quality between the buns, but an expanded menu and Rosie and Aaron's fanatical dedication to giving their customers what



Rosie and Aaron love their burger too



Gouda Burger 2

made from hand-cut fresh Idaho potatoes, is enough to be shared by two. He was very amused to watch a famous French chef demonstrating the best way to make fried potatoes on a gourmet cooking show and could only comment "He stole my recipe!" Try them the English way-with vinegar, and you'll wonder how you ever ate fries without it. This same 5-star chef also swears by Gouda as the best topping for the ideal gourmet cheeseburger.

they really want has resulted in a unique menu.

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression," comments Aaron; and upon entering 5 Burgers Aruba in The Village Mall in Palm Beach, one is struck by utterly spotless surroundings and a smiling, friendly, attentive service crew. Of course, the main item on the menu is burgers-the way they were meant to be, thick and juicy, made fresh daily and 100% pure beef, the kind that made the hamburger a traditional American treat.

Prices vary only slightly between regular and small (basically 2 patties or 1) with specialty items such as Gouda Burger, Farmer's Burger, Man Burger (almost 12 ounces of choice beef), and a Western Burger with crispy onion rings and BBQ sauce. All of these can be personalized with an incredible array of toppings, (mushrooms, jalapeño peppers, bacon, cheese, lettuce, tomato...whatever the list goes on) at absolutely no extra cost.

5 Burger portions are ENORMOUS! Aaron suggests that even their small serving of fries, which are

If you are a fan of crispy friend onion rings, as we are at THE MORNING NEWS, you cannot leave there without trying their secret recipe batter-dipped gourmet rings, made from fresh, not frozen onions. Unquestionably, the best we have had anywhere, and for those that like a little spice, the fried jalapeños are a real treat. Aaron and Rosie have expanded their menu to accommodate certain tastes and dietary needs; they offer a tasty grilled chicken sandwich as well.

5 Burgers Aruba is open for lunch & dinner - daily hours are Noon to 10-ish; delivery is available to both the high-rise and low-rise hotel and beach district for orders over \$50. Enjoy a great lunch without ever leaving the beach by calling 586-3904. However, we suggest you stop by and enjoy their authentic, heartfelt hospitality; it is not unusual for either owner or Manager Marc Anthony when things are not too busy, to sit and chat while sharing their knowledge of the island. Totally yummy and fun plus a great deal for a quality burger, they are definitely worth a visit

SPORTS

Messi convinced Argentina can win World Cup



BUENOS AIRES (AFP) - Barcelona star Lionel Messi says he is convinced he can lift the World Cup with Argentina, the forward said in an interview published Monday with the Argentina Football Association.

Messi has won a host of top honours with Barca but has yet to taste major honours with the albiceleste, who are without a top title since 1993 and who

flopped at the Copa America on home soil in July with many observers puzzled as to why his club form rarely appears at international level.

"I still have this dream and that is to be a world champion and lift the Copa America with the national side. And I know I'll do it, I am convinced I shall," insisted Messi.

"I don't have to demonstrate anything to anybody. I would love to win a title with the national team but I am just another one in the group who wants to do the best for Argentine football, nothing more," added Messi.

Under new coach Alejandro Sabella, Argentina got off to a mediocre start to their World Cup qualifiers with an embarrassing loss to Venezuela but

their recent win over Colombia put them on a more even keel and they are now level on points with regional group leaders Uruguay - albeit having played a game more - and Venezuela.

"The group are doing fine. But we needed a win like that to strengthen ourselves. It has revitalised us," Messi said, recognising that "sometimes we don't quite get up to the mark either in terms of performance or the result. We are aware of that."

On the difference between playing for his country and Barca, with whom he has just won the world club title, Messi said: "They are two different things. Barcelona are the best team in the world - even non-fans admit as much. That is the result of years of hard work with the same teammates."

Nadal looks to recover extra spark in 2012

(AFP) - Nadal says his game this year has been too predictable and he has sometimes lacked drive on court -- weaknesses he plans to overcome for Wimbledon and the 2012 Olympics.

"With the years, you lose a bit of intensity. Intensity in your self-belief, concentration, being positive, believing things will go well -- those are in the mind. With the years you lose that a bit," he told the Spanish daily El Pais in an interview published Monday.

The 25-year-old world number two led Spain to a fifth Davis Cup title in December

and won the French Open this year.

But he lost in the Wimbledon and US Open finals to Novak Djokovic and surrendered his number one spot to the Serb as a result.

"My mind was good in the first half of the year, not perfect because I needed a bit more in the games against Djokovic. But it was fine," he told the paper.

"I have started to work, fight again.. but clearly I lacked a bit in my level of tennis. When you have it, your mind responds better. I have

needed to be less predictable playing. I have been too predictable many times during the season," Nadal said.

"Those are things that I have to recover for 2012."

Nadal said he had to play more inside the court to overwhelm his opponents and take control instead of letting them dictate matches.

The Spaniard said he had a good 2011 overall but felt he was "bad" towards the end of the year and "very bad" when he crashed out of the season-ending ATP World Tour Finals to Jo-Wilfried Tsonga.

Rose lifts Bulls

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"Everybody wasn't happy with the process or the finished product but thanks for your support and patience," Fisher told the crowd.

After almost having to cancel the season, the league and players union agreed on a last-minute labour deal which resulted in a compressed 66-game schedule, beginning with five games on Christmas Day.

Because of the lockout teams have had a little more than two weeks and just two exhibition games to get ready for the season.

Dallas caught fire last year and beat the Miami Heat for the NBA title but the Heat

earned a measure of revenge Sunday by holding on to beat the Mavericks 105-94.

In other opening-day games, the New York Knicks edged the Boston Celtics 106-104, Oklahoma City defeated Orlando 97-89 and the Los Angeles Clippers beat Golden State 105-86.

Chicago are one of the pre-season favorites to win the championship this year after making it all the way to the league semi-finals last year before losing to Miami in five games.

Rose, 23, recently signed a five-year, multi-million dollar contract extension.



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NBA: Rose lifts Bulls over Lakers in opener



Derrick Rose #1 of the Chicago Bulls puts a shot up during the game against the Los Angeles Lakers.

LOS ANGELES (AFP) - Derrick Rose scored the go-ahead basket with 4.8 seconds remaining as the Chicago Bulls

posted their season-opening win on Christmas Day by stunning the Los Angeles Lakers 88-87.

While Rose provided the finishing scoring touch, teammate Luol Deng gave the Bulls the fourth-quarter spark they needed to come from behind in front of a crowd of 18,997 at Staples Center arena on Sunday.

"We showed fight," said Rose. "We don't want to be in a situation like that but we got it done."

Deng scored nine points in the final quarter and intercepted a Kobe Bryant pass then quickly got the ball

to Rose who drove to the basket before pulling up and draining a short one-handed lob.

Bryant then had a chance to put the Lakers back in front but his jumper from in close was blocked by Deng at the buzzer.

"I wanted to crowd him so he didn't have a jump shot," Deng said of stopping Bryant.

Reigning league MVP Rose finished with 22 points and five assists and Deng had 21 points for the Bulls who moved to 7-7 in their last 14 season openers.

"That is just something I am used to doing if I am going to my right hand. They let me get to my right hand and that's how it got up," Rose said of the game-winning shot.

Bryant, who is playing with a bandaged wrist to protect a torn tendon, scored a game high 28 points and Pau Gasol had 14 points for the Lakers who have a 36-16 record in season openers in franchise history.

But the Bulls have now taken the sides' last two meetings after dropping seven straight to the Lakers.

The Lakers are one of the NBA's most storied franchises but they enter the season with

plenty of uncertainty, the biggest concern being the absence of legendary coach Phil Jackson who retired with 11 championship rings.

Fragile centre Andrew Bynum is suspended for the first four games of the season, Bryant has decided not to have surgery on his wrist injury, and Lamar Odom has gone to rival Dallas after demanding a trade during the pre-season.

"We are going through some growing pains and we are going to have to learn from them," Lakers coach Mike Brown said. "This one hurts, whether we lost by one point or 10 points."

It was the first time since the start of the 2008-09 season that the Lakers have not begun their home schedule with a championship ring ceremony at centre court.

Instead Lakers guard and president of the players union, Derek Fisher, took the microphone before the game to talk about the new collective bargaining agreement.

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NFL: Pats surge past Dolphins to grab playoff bye



GREEN BAY: Aaron Rodgers #12 of the Green Bay Packers runs the ball and is tackled by Brian Urlacher #54 of the Chicago Bears.

FOXBOROUGH (AFP) - Tom Brady's New England Patriots clinched a playoff bye by rallying for a 27-24 win over the Miami Dolphins in one of 13 Christmas Eve day games in the NFL Saturday.

New England scored on its first five possessions of the third quarter after falling behind 17-0 at the half.

Brady completed 20 of 27 passes for 217 yards in the second half for New England (12-3) who won its seventh consecutive game.

After the Houston Texans lost to the Indianapolis Colts on Thursday, New England needed a win or a tie to lock up one of the top two spots in the AFC.

Brady finished the game going 27 of 46 for 304 passing yards. He completed just seven of 19 passes for 87 yards and was sacked three times in the first half.

But Brady opened the second half in style, completing a 22-yard pass to Rob Gronkowski on the first play.

Miami who began the sea-

son with seven straight losses now have five wins and 10 losses heading into the final weekend of the season. They are 1-1 since Todd Bowles took over as head coach from Tony Sparano.

"They just came out and they wanted it more in the second half than we did," said Dolphins interim head coach Bowles.

Miami running back Reggie Bush had another outstanding game with his fourth straight rushing performance of at least 100 yards. He finished with a career-high 203 yards.

Cam Newton, the No. 1 pick in the NFL entry draft, broke Peyton Manning's rookie record for yards passing as the Carolina Panthers handed the Tampa Bay Buccaneers their ninth consecutive loss 48-16.

Newton passed for 171 yards and three touchdowns and scored on a brilliant 49-yard run up the middle.

The Panthers (6-9) compiled 397 yards in three quar-

ters and scored on eight of their first nine possessions in the rout.

Newton entered the game needing 18 yards passing to break Manning's record of 3,739.

"It's tremendous, but if you ask the young man he'll tell you the most important thing is we won the game," Panthers coach Ron Rivera said.

The Panthers led 20-10 at halftime but seized command in the third quarter as Newton threw an 11-yard touchdown pass to put Carolina ahead 34-10.

The Detroit Lions made the playoffs for the first time since 1999 as Matthew Stafford tossed three touchdown passes in the opening half to beat the San Diego Chargers 38-10.

Detroit has won three consecutive games after a seven-game slump to earn a wild-card spot in the playoffs.

Detroit held the Chargers scoreless until midway through the third quarter, when Philip Rivers threw an 11-yard pass to Malcom Floyd to make it 24-7.

San Francisco kicker David Akers also set the NFL record for most field goals in one season with his 41st in the 49ers 19-17 win over Seattle.

In other games it was Oakland 16 Kansas City 13; Ten-

nessee 23 Jacksonville 17; Pittsburgh 27 St. Louis 0; Buffalo 40 Denver 14; Minnesota 33 Washington 26; Baltimore 20 Cleveland 14; New York Giants 29 New York Jets 14; Cincinnati 23 Arizona 16; and Philadelphia 20 Dallas 7.

Packers clinch top NFC playoff seed

GREEN BAY (AFP) - The Green Bay Packers clinched the top seed in the NFC playoffs Sunday by defeating the Chicago Bears 35-21 with a five touchdown performance from star quarterback Aaron Rodgers.

It marked the first five touchdown game for Rodgers in his NFL career as he threw two touchdowns each to Jordy Nelson and James Jones. Jeremichael Finley also caught a touchdown pass from Rodgers.

"Yeah, this one's pretty special," Rodgers said.

Rodgers completed 21 of 29 passes for 283 yards with no interceptions. He also surpassed Lynn Dickey's single-season franchise record of 4,458 yards passing.

Green Bay has one game

left on the season but it is unknown how much Rodgers will play in the final game against the Detroit Lions.

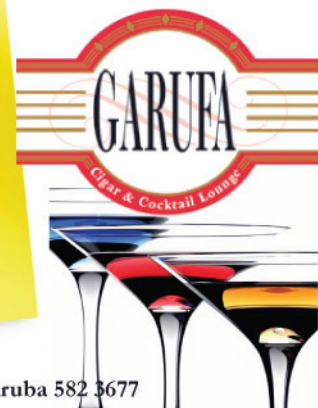
The loss eliminated Chicago (7-8) from the post-season and gave the Atlanta Falcons a berth in the playoffs.

Kahlil Bell ran for 121 yards for Chicago, but Rodgers engineered three quick scoring drives as the Packers seized command of the contest.

With Sunday's game in hand, Rodgers was given a rest and backup quarterback Matt Flynn took over in the fourth quarter.

Chicago has lost five consecutive games since losing quarterback Jay Cutler with a broken right thumb on November 20 against the San Diego Chargers.

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